

THE HOUSE OF
TWENTY SEVEN GARDENS
BY
GERALD STANLEY LEE





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The House *of* Twenty Seven Gardens

BY

Gerald Stanley Lee

Author of "Crowds" and of "Inspired
Millionaires"



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I

TWO INCHES ON BROAD-
WAY

A MAN from up in the country,
I am told, planked down fifty
thousand dollars the other day to get
the undisputed right to two inches on
Broadway.

It didn't surprise me. People who
belong in New York never really
want us — those of us who live out-
side, to get more than two inches.

A new fresh crowd of a hundred
thousand people comes to New York
every day, sticks its Hundred-thou-
sand Foot in the door, looks around
hard, and goes home feeling out of it.

[5]

Sept, Wednesday, 1951

New York is the capital, the national headquarters of homelessness.

‘Two Inches on Broadway’—in four little words expresses New York like a book.

No one feels he belongs here.

And for that matter, for those of us who come to New York, even if we could get our two inches on Broadway, — our two inches apiece, there soon would not be enough two inches apiece to go around.

New York people have room for our money but they make us feel crowded and not particularly longed for.

Even people who belong in New York do not long for each other here.

This explains why they have these great serious skyscrapers like The Equitable where you can go in any day and see twenty-five thousand

people — all New Yorkers — trying
to crowd each other off into the
clouds.

II

WANTED: A GREAT HOTEL IN NEW YORK

I WANT a hotel I would like in New York — a hotel that would give me as I come in all fresh with the dew on me from the country, a great greeting from a great city.

I don't know that I would be allowed to belong in it — the hotel I am writing about — but I would like to go by on the other side of the street and look up at it.

It would warm my heart to New York to know it is here.

Perhaps I could call on somebody in it.

For years I have carried around with me up and down the streets in New York my hope for this hotel.

This is my story about it.

People will tell me perhaps that I am always writing about some hope I have for crowds and for cities and for my country.

But it is different this time. I am not writing about a mere hope. It is a hope — this time, I can put my thumb down on.

I do not propose to be whiffed away by people in these few pages as an idealist, or rather what most people mean by an idealist. Most people when they call a man an idealist mean that he is a man who wants what he can not have. I mean by an idealist a man who wants something which looks as if it cannot be had, which he is going to get.

I am going to give in these pages names, dates and places for my hope; put my thumb down on it and hold it there. I shall stand and watch it going up like a skyscraper, crowded all over and black with people putting my hope up forty stories high before my eyes in steel and glass.

III

WHAT WOULD A GREAT HOTEL BE LIKE?

THE way to begin a great hotel is to begin at the spiritual foundations, put in an underpinning of people — men everybody knows about, and who want to know each other, the men in America who would make a hotel great in five minutes, if everybody knew they were in it.

Any hotel can begin with a great stupid hole in a rock, and with concrete foundations, and with having cellars five stories deep. Any hotel can begin with roof gardens.

This has been done.

But there has never been a hotel as yet that has begun to be a great hotel by making a frank wholesale national sweep across a hundred million people, that has begun by assailing ten thousand cities, and by asking the ten thousand cities to sort over their populations and to contribute to the great hotel in New York, men to make it great with.

The first hotel to do this will be a great hotel. It will mass together and sum up America in three thousand rooms. The physical and spiritual presence of a nation will be there in the hotel under one roof, all day and all night. There will be in session there all day, all night — year in — year out — under one roof, the creative lighted-up minds, the eyes, the hands, the feet, of a hundred million people.

The men will look into each others' faces and be glad to be together.

They will feel at home with their own kind. They will make in their hotel a kind of national fireside of each other. They will be — these three thousand men and women, the real facade or face of the hotel. They will make the hotel to people going by, express something.

Instead of this we are having now in New York a thousand big hotels standing up and down the roaring streets gazing at each new fresh three hundred thousand people a day with their big blank splendid faces.

IV

HOW TO BEGIN A GREAT HOTEL

AS I was walking down Victory Way during the last Loan Drive in New York, a voice from Washington began talking to me out of the empty air — began floating quietly all around me — all around everybody for five blocks.

I could not help thinking what it would be like if one could have a whole country all fitted up the way Victory Way was — loud-speaking telephone receivers hanging low over ten thousand cities, so that one could go up on Mount Tom any time one

liked and have a word with ten thousand cities; talk quietly three thousand miles with all these separated lonely scattered crowds in streets, all unconscious of course of the others, each crowd all alone as it were in its own city by itself, not knowing of the other ten thousand crowds in ten thousand cities listening too. The first thing I would do probably would be to get in a word about my idea of a great hotel in New York. With a country all fitted up, I would begin. I would say, 'I want a silence by ten thousand cities!' Then in the silence of ten thousand cities, each in its own little pocket of light in three thousand miles of darkness, I would begin saying from up on Mount Tom in a low dignified tone to the congregation of cities (I used to be a parson and I naturally think of them as a congre-

gation) 'I am starting a hotel for big men in New York. Each city proceed to pick out, please, the ten best men you have, the men who make you proudest of yourself the way Ole Hansen makes Seattle proud, and send their names and addresses to . . .'

V

WHY SHOULD A GREAT HOTEL STAND WITH ITS HAT IN ITS HAND?

WHY is it that a great hotel ever takes the attitude any more than a private house does, of wishing people would come to it?

Because most hotels make the mistake of putting in their spiritual foundations afterwards. They put the tank on the roof, and put the elevator boy in the elevator and the doorman at the door. Then they begin on their spiritual foundations. Then people come along and watch

them putting their spiritual foundations in afterwards, and quite naturally would rather go to a hotel where the foundations are already in — the kind of hotel that naturally thinks of people first.

The practical and permanent foundation for a great hotel is imagination about the people it wants to belong in it. What a great hotel should do first is pick out something to do that will touch the imagination of people with wanting to belong in it. The thing that touches the imagination of people most, in a hotel, so that they want to stay in it or want to go away, is the people they see walking around in the corridors taking the liberty of looking as if they thought they belonged there.

The way to make a great hotel quickly is to pick out the best hun-

dred and fifty thousand people in the United States, tell each of the hundred and fifty thousand that the other 149,999 are there — when in New York. I do not quite think I would begin a great hotel in New York by saying that there are twenty-eight elevators in it, thirty-six stories, five of them under ground, and two thousand servants and three thousand bathtubs. I would begin the hotel by picking out people I would like to know, people I like to look at while I eat.

I would propose to begin the hotel with these. They would pick out the others.

VI

HOW SHOULD THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE A HOTEL GREAT, BE PICKED OUT?

I KNOW it would not do, of course, but I do have a hankering when I think of my great hotel for the position of picking the people out myself. It would spoil the hotel probably — make it narrow or something — and would take too long, and possibly before I got through I would be arrested. But I would like to try. I have always had a feeling, a feeling I can hardly hold in some days when I am going through

crowds in the street, of wanting to speak to people I like. Of course I have other things to do in my life, but while I go about doing them I know or half know I am really conducting my life after all, at heart and down underneath, as one long search for people.

Every day I sit in trains and street-cars and pick out people I like. I wish I could follow them home, find some excuse they would not mind, for knowing them. Then I would find some way of getting them all together — the people I like, and making a little city of them, or beginning a new fresh little world with them — all kinds of people, the more kinds the better; some quite poor, some very rich; and people with queer clothes too sometimes, just their faces shining out of them or

over them; people that draw one to them. . . .

My first impulse in starting a great hotel for New York would be to go to the Grand Central Station or the Pennsylvania. I would stand at the twenty-seven gates of the Grand Central Station as the three hundred thousand people, a new three hundred thousand each three days, come in; look in their faces as they file by, pick out the people I would like to eat with, that I would like to see a whole dining-room full of while I eat; people who look interesting and alive, and who as they walk seem to be buoyant electrical people, — people who seem to be taking the world in around them instead of being swallowed up by it. I confess to a partiality, possibly a weakness, for people who look as if they were some-

body in particular, who stand out a little in a crowd as having things inside them, more especially their own, products in the spiritual market as it were one would have to go to them to get. Of course there are two hundred trains every twenty-four hours in the station, many containing commuters, but I would take the expresses, as many as I could do a day, and when I saw somebody who made me feel like the small boy who stepped up to the man in the street and said 'Please, sir, aren't you somebody in particular, sir?' I would apologize, walk along with him, tell him I was starting a great hotel for New York and picking slowly out of the three hundred thousand a day who arrive here, people who look like the kind of people I would like to belong to the same club with.

Of course I know in a way as well as any one that this idea may seem too playful or fanciful — this Grand Central idea, as a way of picking out people for a great serious hotel in New York, and I am not saying I am ever going to have the nerve to do it. But I like to mention it and to dwell on it a minute — this Grand Central idea, because this way of picking out people for a great hotel has in it, it seems to me, the two great fundamental principles that will have to be depended upon for creating a great hotel in New York. The spirit of these two principles would have to be followed in whatever method of selecting people for a great hotel may be used.

The first principle is that the people who belong in the hotel should be democratically picked out. Every-

body must be given a chance to be in it at first. The Grand Central Station comes nearer to being a whole nation under one roof, comes nearer to having in it every day all the elements which go to make this nation great, than any other place in the world.

The second principle in selecting people for a great hotel is that they should be personally or aristocratically picked out. Picked-out people should be picked out by picked-out people, by our real American aristocrats, by men who have wide sympathies, affections and insights in a bird's-eye-view — a Grand Central Station view of the human-nature that comes to New York.

Nothing less than the Grand Central will do to pick out America's choicest best hundred thousand peo-

ple, the people a composite picture of whom, like a portrait of the nation in this crisis of the world, would make forty nations trust us.

To get a great hotel for New York, boil down Grand Central Station.

Of course I could go to the Waldorf and begin; save some time perhaps by picking over a crowd that already feels picked-over; I would not have to do a great raw social protoplasm of people like the Grand Central Station. But there are thousands of people I want and am very particular to have in my hotel who wouldn't look at the Waldorf or The Ritz-Carlton. I could not work up in four years in a hotel like The Ritz-Carlton enough to fill up one story of my hotel. The Ritz-Carlton is just a huge nook or cranny or corner of human nature; a great raw unrelated miscellany, a

glorious expensive scrap-bag of people who are all gathered together about the one great beautiful common spiritual yearning to pay more than they ought to for what they eat.

As a principle for selecting people one wants to be in a great hotel with, this has never seemed to me really exclusive. Skip people's check-books, hurry past people's stomachs and look in their faces; summon all a devil knows and all an angel knows and stand in crowds and let the souls and bodies of crowds flow by — the great free swinging breezy Mississippi of people. . . .

I would take nothing of a less catholic, less god-like tolerance and love than a railway station for my hotel. Then as I say I would follow people to where they stop and on the next day would ask permission to know

them. I would tell them I was picking out, with others to help me do it, of course, the best hundred and fifty thousand people in America to belong in the same hotel with when in New York.

Of course it might be paying too much of a compliment to oneself to think that one could really pick out at sight in the Grand Central Station after a few years the best hundred and fifty thousand people from a hundred million people. But I would not mind putting in most of my time at finding out who the best hundred and fifty thousand men and women are in this country, their names and addresses. I would gladly spend the rest of my life standing and looking through crowds at the hundred and fifty thousand faces just to say I had seen them, just to know what they

were like and that they were here — that people like these people, in this country were to be had — a hundred and fifty thousand of them. I would look them up, see them in detail one by one. Then I would get them — three thousand at a time all together in one big room in New York and let them see each other.

VII

A HOTEL WITH A TEMPERAMENT

NO one would want to be connected with a hotel, a huge private hotel with five thousand people in it who felt they had been set aside by America as belonging in the front row with the best one hundred and fifty thousand Americans.

A hotel that professed to contain the best hundred and fifty thousand Americans would be n i c k n a m e d Hotel Prig, and no one would want to be seen in it.

The best way to avoid the 'I and not You' people and to keep the hotel

from being swamped by snobs, is to hit upon a principle of selection which puts people together not because they feel superior but because they like to be together. A democratic, modest and yet exclusive way to begin a great hotel is to determine that it shall have a certain temperament, and see to it that the people all through America from five thousand cities who have that temperament are invited to belong to it.

These people would promptly give the hotel its character, its face or its features, and having the common instinctive point of view toward the world and the people in it, that goes with their temperament, the people would naturally feel restful and stimulated when together. A man would put up at the hotel not because he makes any special pretension or be-

longs to a temperament that considers itself superior to the others, but because the kind of temperament he happens to have, is the kind the hotel has, and because when he comes to it he fits into its human color-scheme.

There is nothing priggish or exclusive about a man's preferring to eat and sleep where he calls out the best things in the people around him and they call out the best things in him. He will go to his own hotel instead of going to the Waldorf not because he feels superior to people in the Waldorf but because he would feel lonely with them, because there is nothing that would be especially his at the Waldorf. The Waldorf would seem like a kind of street of food to him or a vast sponge or honeycomb of sleep.

In his own hotel he is not merely entertained in his own pigeon-hole,

No. 1714 on the seventeenth floor, but he feels he has the run in spirit of the whole three thousand rooms. He is entertained as it were by the whole hotel. All the people in it are being hosts to him and hosts to each other.

VIII

SUPERMAN INN

I WOULD like to see a dozen or so temperament hotels started in New York. But there is one particular temperament to make a great hotel out of, or to put in for the spiritual foundations of a great hotel which I think should be arranged for in New York first.

The men from five thousand cities who have creative imagination — the men who have proved in business and in any one of a hundred callings that they have creative imagination, that they have stretched the capacity of the city in which they live, their own

capacity, the capacity of the men around them, should all have the privilege of being together when they come to New York and allowed to look into each others' faces.

The hotel would be famous all day, all night, all the year. It would be like belonging to the French Academy or the Legion of Honor, of business honor — to be registered in the hotel and to be among the men five thousand cities think belong in it. People would go by looking up at the windows and watching the doors. The men would greet each other from their five thousand cities, be conscious of each other, have a class consciousness of their power in New York and in the nation. They would look at things together, do things together and put their shoulders to the wheel of a world.

Many people seem to think that when one speaks of a man as a superman, one crowds him away from being in touch with the rest of us; shoves him off the edge of the planet into a kind of nowhere or limbo where he is supposed to put up with associating with demigods.

But when I use the word superman I do not mean business angels or absent-minded and superior nobodies.

I know scores of supermen. My experience is that the best ones all insist upon putting through the most difficult superman feat of all, that of living with the rest of us, doing what they do with the rest of us, helping us do it, and letting us help them do it.

Nearly every city has a few supermen. A superman is a man who overreaches what is generally supposed to be possible. Any man who

by what he sees or thinks of, stretches the capacity of the human race, invents something or invents the means of doing something which people have generally supposed people could not do, who sets people all about him to doing it, should be eligible for active membership in Superman Inn.

Men that these creative men or supermen find it especially congenial to be with and to do business with can be made Associate Members of Superman Inn.

This hotel, for instance, it seems to me is a superman idea. It is being started by men who though they would not like to be called supermen, have the superman gift of seeing a thing further and doing it deeper than other people.

The way to get the picked men of five thousand cities who have creative

practical imagination about business into one hotel in New York is for the hotel to have creative imagination itself, and prove it by putting forward an idea that has creative imagination in it—creative imagination in conceiving it and still more creative imagination in carrying it out.

The picked men of five thousand cities will feel when they are confronted with the hotel's idea that they know the hotel and will want to belong in it.

This is what the hotel's idea is doing.

The hotel is not submitting itself to the people of five thousand cities. It is sorting over the people of five thousand cities and determining which are the men out of all the men in five thousand cities who are going to belong in it.

IX

HOTEL TO-MORROW

THE Harvard Club is full of men who are all got together because of what they used to be; because years ago under the same elm trees year after year in forty different classes they all tried forty different ways of getting out of being educated in the same little square in Cambridge. It is a great common binding memory. But suppose we had a Harvard Club of men from Harvard who are bound together not because of what they used to be but because of what they are going to be; men who are lighting the torches of

their time and putting the light in the eyes of cities like Brush, waking up the solar plexus of a nation, pounding a hundred million people into being their best selves like Theodore Roosevelt?

I want a hotel where I can go in and see the Ben Lindsays, the Arthur Woods and McAdoos sitting around in the lobbies, with their new lives for boys, their new policemen and their new tunnels in their hands; and Cassats sitting with little Pennsylvania Stations while they talk lying in their laps. I want some place in New York where I can go in and look over the register — the card-index of the powers and the gifts of the people, the inventory of a new world.

Yale men are bound together in a club because they sat on the same

fence. And thousands of clubs are based upon memory rather than upon imagination, and upon looking backward instead of forward. I want a hotel which might be called Hotel To-Morrow. When I say to-morrow I mean to-day with reference to to-morrow. I mean To-Day, a pile-driver skyscraper To-Day, with a thousand men driving down their vision's deep foundations, lifting their powers and wills across the land and against the sky.

The hotel would be the spiritual capital of America in session day and night — the brain of a nation in a skyscraper. I would make it the most famous hotel not only in the world but in all ages of the world. Crowds would stand and look at it like a cathedral. Men would point out to strangers from their windows

the steam from the roof. Other ages have built cathedrals and put in statues of their dead men of vision. This one will build its home of vision, its house of twenty-seven gardens, and before our eyes there shall live in it and shall go out and in from it, forty stories men of genius. I like to sober down the word genius. I mean by it solid and substantial and practical genius, focusing its eyes instead of rolling them.

Year after year I grow weary and more weary of seeing schools and colleges shoving out buildings at me instead of men; of having great universities saying to me 'See our laboratory!' instead of saying 'Here is our Edison.' Or they say to me 'Look at our art gallery!' instead of saying to me 'Here is our Blakelock, here is our Whistler.'

In the same way we ought to have in New York a hotel that beckons to us — to all young men what we may yet be ourselves — a hotel that shall be a chronic national convention all day, all night, all the year, of picked men looking in each others' faces.

Five thousand cities walking the corridors, tucked away asleep at night, twenty-seven gardens over them against the sky!

We will like to go by and see all these men, forty stories of them up there across the street, building a nation and rebuilding a world in their very dreams up there behind their windows—a skyscraper reeking with Panama Canals, with Olympics — slinging together a hundred cities with wireless telephones, making nations fly over each other like great birds.

X

THE SKULL OF A NATION

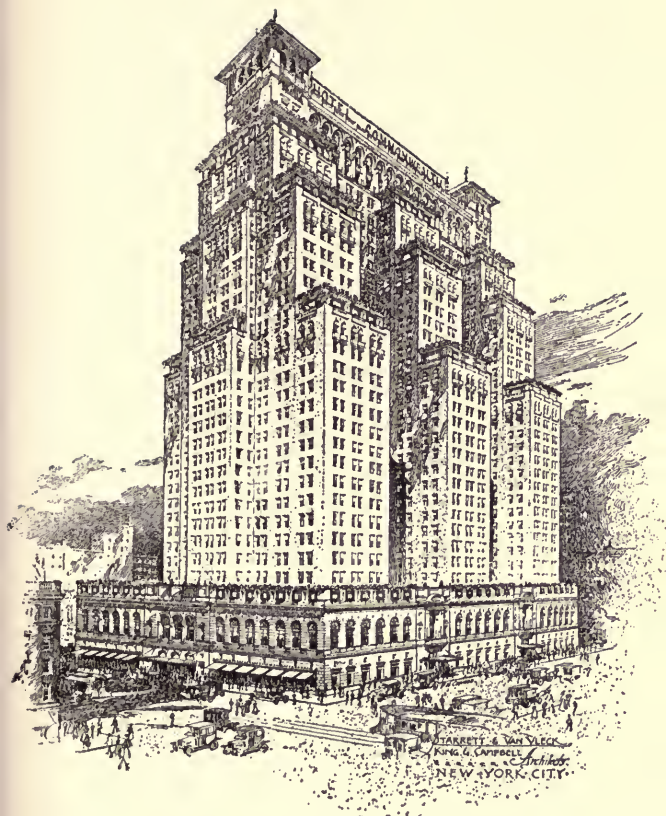
SOME people will laugh and say 'You could not hold down such a hotel, twenty-seven roof gardens, forty stories chock-full of genius, dreams gleaming on four thousand windows. It would tug like a balloon on the steel strings of its foundations and float away, leaving a hole at Fifty-fifth Street and Broadway.

Not at all. I want out of America's fifty thousand bankers the one thousand creative bankers in my hotel. There are bankers who sit down with a man, shut their eyes at him, run their money off at him by counting

off his collateral like a cash register; and there are other bankers who will lend money to a voice, to a look in a boy's eye, and who get rich and solid out of their power to do it. It is the same with engineers.

There are two kinds of solid men in every calling — those who become substantial and solid men by creating values, and those who collect. There are two kinds of physicians. Some physicians have grown rich and solid because they can tell with the sense of touch what is the matter inside a man's abdomen. Thousands of engineers have grown rich and solid by guessing what was a hundred and forty feet under the ground two thousand miles away, by looking over a piece of paper with some geology and chemistry on it — by looking over facts other men saw without seeing

what the facts were for or seeing the facts that went with them, or seeing what separated facts would be for when they were all put together. There are men in every calling who seem to have minds that work with secret springs — one touch on their minds on facts everybody knew and, as on a switch, you turn on a cityful of lights. These are the men I want for my hotel, men who have this temperament in every range of human activity. I want these men to get together and have as it were a home out of all the nation. I want a door-plate for men of genius in New York. And artists too. And now and then even an author or two, if we show any interest in other people, in the creative acts of other people, should be allowed to belong to it, or to come in perhaps and wander around.



THE SKULL OF A NATION

I want to see it visualized, what a hotel would be like, a hotel with a soul, a sitting-room for five thousand cities, a crowd fire-place; five thousand cities cozy and friendly like five men.

A hotel which shall be a club of intimate strangers. Everybody you meet somebody in particular. You see great men going by you in the corridors anonymously every few minutes. Your ear follows the pages about, calling out names known round the world.

XI

PAY ?

I KNOW that with many people, if an idea is alluring their backs are up at once. It is so much against it.

For myself, I like to let an idea allure, if it likes to, at first. Then I like to put it through its paces afterwards and make it get down to the steady, hard work of seeing through itself.

This idea of mine, for instance is so pleased with itself, and with how it is going to enjoy itself, and how a hundred and fifty thousand people are going to enjoy it, that I am afraid

it looks as if it did not care whether the hundred and fifty thousand people can afford to enjoy it or not.

When an idea looks so pleased, one feels perhaps that nothing would suit it better than to chuck fifteen million dollars down into a hole, smile sweetly, and go off and leave it forever.

This is why I want to look into it a little further.

The people who are reading these pages, who know how to hold in and to look out, who are not fooled by what they want, or by what they would like to believe, or by an alluring idea, who want to be satisfied of the financial prospect and soundness of our cooperative hotel idea, are the very people of all others we want to fill our hotel with.

The first reason why the hotel is

going to make money is that it might have for its motto

FOLKS FIRST

I would like to dwell on the financial bearings of this for a moment.

If I were appointed to the position of standing by the ropes in the Grand Central Station as the trains came in, to pick people out, what it would practically come to, would be our having (by instinct and without my knowing it) a hotel exclusively inhabited by three thousand people who liked reading my books, or by people who would like them when they tried them, or (when the hotel is crowded) people who had read them twice.

Might be worse. It would at least give the hotel a definite character,

which everybody could know or read up.

But something tells me by instinct as it were, though very faintly, that there would be something very much the matter with that hotel!

But it would not hurt the hotel from a money point of view. The idea of selecting the people in this way would be a good idea. All that would be the matter with it would be me.

All that is needed to show how good the idea is from a money point of view, is to take some other author.

Lyman Abbott for instance.

Suppose we had a Lyman Abbott hotel — a hotel in which all the Abbottites in America pick each other out to board with while in New York?

A Lyman Abbott hotel would be from the start an overwhelming financial success. It would be like

Smiley's at Lake Mohonk. It would be an enormously valuable property at once because crowds of people from all over the country would know with a thought, without taking the trouble to come to New York to look, exactly what the people in a Lyman Abbott hotel would be like. They would know and know hard that they wanted to stay there or stay away.

The first financial principle in starting anything that deals with crowds of people — especially in starting a hotel, is to give the thing as sharp and honestly definite a character or profile as possible. A hotel should have a face that can be seen — an expression that can be caught three thousand miles by five thousand cities. A Lyman Abbott hotel would at once have this enormous national physiognomy.

A Lyman Abbott hotel would look the part. People would know it would have from cellar to roof garden a benignant, quiet inquiring earnest look and the halls would be full of kindly inquiring people, tolerant and knowing, paying their bills with a deep penetrating spiritual joy, in it and to it, all the year round.

A Lyman Abbott hotel would be a kind of chronic Mohonk set right out boldly in the middle of The Great White Way in New York.

The way to get sure money is to have a sure definite outline, or rugged profile of what the money will get.

Two other hotels with people picked out to spend money in them could be established across the street from each other in New York and would succeed financially at once. One hotel full of people who liked to be

patted on the head by a Woodrow Wilson, and another across the street who liked to be slapped on the back by a Theodore Roosevelt. Both of these hotels would pay because the people in them would have such a good time and get so much extra for their money thrown in, in just looking at one another. The same would be true of a Grape Juice Inn, preferably on the site of Sherrys' with all the people picked out to go in it, by their common wistful thirty-year hoping on Bryan.

To make the people in it happy and make a hotel make money, a hotel like a human being must have a marked temperament — a character which makes people feel sure in coming to it that they are going to get one set of things and that they are not going to get another.

The more in a hotel the character strikes through in it, the more it succeeds.

For assured financial success it is not enough to post up a name on the outside of the hotel, or print it on the stationery or have it woven into towels. The name must be wrought through the hotel into the faces of the people one sees in the halls.

XII

THE GOOD AND THE BAD

I WOULD be ashamed to have anything to do with a hotel in New York that tried to sort out the good from the bad.

I have always had unpleasant feelings about some churches in some communities, because they seemed to let themselves get in the position of seeming to do this, of corraling people in pews at eleven A.M. every Sunday morning and saying to everybody "These people are spiritual sheep. Those that go by outside are spiritual goats."

As my own experience is that the

sheep and goat division in human nature is run as a straight line right down through the middle of every man, the line moving now to the right and now to the left with a jerk sometimes, a hotel that fell into this sheep and goat illusion, that thought it was dividing people into the good and the bad would be to me an insufferable suffocating and lonely place. I would not want to be in it, and I would not want to call on anybody in it who did.

But a hotel that is based on a distinction between the quick and the dead—is, between the comparatively quick and the comparatively dead, I would not mind. A hotel which took in men of proved creative imagination and which did not have room for men who had less, would not seem to me to be snobbish.

In some cities they have what they call the bob and the nabob sides of a street. If a street had one side exclusively for the quick and another side exclusively for the dead, I would feel hurt probably if I was sorted out and appointed to live on the dead side, but if five thousand cities were to pick out a hundred and fifty thousand men between them as having creative imagination or radium in them, as belonging to the comparatively quick and left me out as belonging to the comparatively dead, I would not feel hurt.

Just one hotel with three thousand people in it that five thousand cities thought were more alive than I was, I would accept cheerfully.

There would be nothing snobbish about it.

If one were going to pick out the

way Lot did, thirty, twenty or ten men in each city of a hundred thousand people who would have the right to put up in New York at Superman Inn, one would probably be able to get out of the hundred thousand one could choose from, fifty men at least that each of the cities would pick out naturally and would acknowledge as the genuine superiors of others in the values they had created for the world, and which they had laid at the feet of the cities in which they live.

There are two general types of men everybody knows in every city — the men who succeed by doing more than they have to, and those who succeed by taking ruthlessly the line of least resistance and by being parasites on those who experiment and create.

There are bankers who succeed by taking ruthlessly the line of least re-

sistance and there are inventive bankers, bankers who invent ways of capitalizing men as values, and who grow rich in discovering men, backing them and sharing with them, and there are other bankers who are less keen about inventors and creative men, who are not especially good at judging the qualities of men and the qualities of ideas, who take the line of least resistance. Engineers, lawyers, real estate men, architects, railroad men and men in every line of human activity divide off and are commonly known to divide off in the city in which they live, to these two classes. The people of every city are competent to recognize these two types of men. And every city would be able to send as its delegates to a New York hotel for men of creative imagination, the men who belonged in it.

For that matter almost anybody can tell the lighted-up men, the men who convey light, heat and power in what they do, as they walk through the street. The men who do what they do, and think what they think with a touch of radium in it, those who act as the conductors of a current, and those who act as non conductors or containers, could be selected competently — those who in a high degree stand out for these qualities, by almost any town or city.

XIII

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

THERE are various ways to begin in picking out people for a really great hotel in New York instead of a merely big one. Having been interested in writing about imagination in business for twenty years and about men who have it, my own idea would be to begin by putting down the names of men with creative imagination in business who have interested me — Tunnel McAdoo for instance and fifty others.

Then I would ask Mr. McAdoo to tell me who were the fifty most absorbing, interesting and powerful

men he had come upon in his business experience of twenty years, men who would have a right by the values they had created for themselves and for their cities to be put up when in New York at a kind of French Academy hotel, or Legion of Honor hotel — the right to be founder-members in a hotel for American men of genius in business.

After Mr. McAdoo had given me his fifty I would ask each of Mr. McAdoo's fifty for their fifty and each of my own fifty for their fifty, until I had covered the country, and had picked out and introduced to each other from Maine to California the men of creative imagination in America.

This is the principle that is being followed.

These men would then be put in as

the solid, the pricelessly solid guaranteed spiritual foundations for our great hotel or national great men's club in New York; or rather as I prefer to say — our little-great men, men who have all the power, the intellectual personal quality, and the technical gifts of great men without bothering to have great standardized reputations for greatness, and without the greatness being cumbersome.

We have in America thousands of men who are being in a humble looking way, great men before our eyes in new ways, in ways the regular standardized humdrum history-modeled, great men have not learned as yet.

What would make the hotel pay would be its exclusiveness. But it would be a new exclusiveness — an exclusiveness in which a hundred mil-

lion people and a great democracy would rejoice, of which people would be proud, — the exclusiveness of men who had been set one side as having created, conceived and carried through values for every one else.

It would be some satisfaction to be in it, or to be put up in it by a member and spend the night, a hotel exclusively occupied by men who have done things people said nobody could do, by men who keel over impossibilities, a hotel without a man allowed in it whose life had said “I can’t”— a national headquarters of ex-impossibilities. When all the men have gone to bed and are tucked away in their iron pigeon holes of sleep, with their heads and their pillows full of dreams, one will go by the door and say “Ex-impossibility No. 917 is asleep here!”

This is what I would call an exclusive hotel — selecting people on a basis of creative imagination instead of Dun or Bradstreet.

After all one gets a rather mixed crowd by taking everybody or anybody who can get into Dun or Bradstreet.

Credit is the minimum thing a business man can make sure of. A hotel based on ability to pay bills or on men who keep their promises would not be particularly magnetic. People would not be caught being jealous of those who are seen going in and out of it. Nobody would get an expanded head from being allowed to stay over night in the same building with three thousand men who always paid their bills. What is it after all to go around a hotel and say as one looks in the faces, "This man is going to pay his

bill!" It does not make a man particularly interesting.

What I want in a hotel — is to see people all around, come on them any minute walking around like Bell and like Edison, and Wilbur Wright, with new worlds in their pockets jingling them like keys — things people said that human beings and nations and cities could never have, and that they are getting before my eyes.

XIV

THE INS

EVERYTHING has its ins and outs. Perhaps my reader would like to suppose a minute — suppose some ins. Suppose you get twenty per cent rebate on your bill. Suppose the hotel earns a 20% dividend, as most hotels would and especially as a full hotel would, with its patrons all engaged.

Suppose you pay two dollars for a dinner.

In an ordinary hotel when you eat, all you get is what you eat, and a two-dollar hole in your pocket book. In this one you feel while you eat it, that

you will get a forty-cent tip for eating your two-dollar dinner, and you can look forward to forty cents more for eating it (or whatever the dividend may be at the end of the year). What is more, you are not only eating for yourself, but you sit in a big dining-room and look around and watch a thousand other people eating for you. Every dinner in sight you see going down you are making money on, and when the nine hundred and ninety-nine other men all around you eating for you and making money for you look up from their plates and see you eating too, they feel you are eating for them.

Of course it is something to be in the room with a thousand men from five thousand cities who have picked each other out; but these other little pleasant delicate financial feelings —

a kind of tobasco sauce of profit with every mouthful, are not without their advantages. If when you reach New York at night, and have not telegraphed, you come up to the desk and stand in a line of twelve men and try to get a room, you watch some other man two places ahead in the line getting your room away from you, you can at least make money on the man who gets your room away from you — this if you don't get your room, — and if you do get a room, you go to sleep in it feeling you get twenty per cent off your bill and then get twenty per cent on your bill besides. (It won't be exactly like this but it is what it amounts to. You get at the end of the year twenty per cent rebate, on what you pay the hotel, and another rebate or dividend on your investment in it.)

In a city where nearly every night people are telephoning to ten or twelve hotels apiece to get a room, or to get any little slit to sleep in New York, — between what your hotel makes on you and what you make on yourself, the Hotel Commonwealth would seem to have very considerable advantages.

XV

MORE INS

THE usual hotel begins with ten bankers lending somebody five million dollars, the hotel has to keep on charging everybody for who comes into the house, after that, all their lives.

Why not be treated by one's hotel as well as a banker?

The banker gets the first rake-off. Why not be your banker yourself? In the Commonwealth Hotel the banking is done by a hundred and fifty thousand people.

Then (as dividends are running in New York hotels now) a ten, twenty

or even forty per cent for staying in it, and then a 5-10-20 per cent profit on everybody else staying in it. Then on top of this you have the privilege of picking out other people to board with you. Still on top of this you feel in a way (as in a Club) that they have picked out you.

* * *

The engaging of the business for the hotel beforehand — that is the advertising, is going to cost you a fraction of one per cent. The agreed profit of the builders from a lifelong established policy of theirs on which they have built millions of dollars' worth of buildings, is a limited profit of ten per cent.

* * *

It is a thing worth not overlooking too, that the hotel is planned to open without a mortgage.

If a hotel has a mortgage everything about it has to keep paying on that mortgage. If a hotel has a mortgage you taste the mortgage every mouthful. The ten men who have lent five million dollars to it to start it, take the first bite in every steak, and out of every potato, and out of every roll you eat.

XVI

OUTS

WHAT are the bad things that can happen and that can interfere with making a hotel a success financially?

It may not find that anybody wants to stop in it.

This has been attended to in the Hotel Commonwealth by engaging the people beforehand.

The people who like to stop in a hotel at first, may be the wrong kind and drive the people who would otherwise like to stop there, away.

This has been attended to by engaging certain guaranteed kinds of cus-

tomers, and having them engage each other before a brick is laid.

There may be people who want to stop in a hotel but there may not be enough of them to keep it full and make every room in it pay.

This has been attended to by giving the hotel such a marked character, such social, intellectual and business distinction that it will have an enormous waiting list of people who would pay five times what it costs, if only they could get someone to invite them to stop in it, or to be seen stopping in it.

The most inspiring thing about the hotel to me would be the millionaires who could not get in.

The Hotel Commonwealth would be the one oasis in the world where one could be sure of resting from mere millionaires sitting around in all

their mereness — spoiling things for everybody.

Plenty of millionaires of course, but real ones.

The other thing that can interfere with the financial success of a great hotel which I had in mind to mention, is dishonesty, inefficiency or extravagance in building it and managing it.

This has been attended to by W. J. Hoggson.

One of the first things men who have had dealings with W. J. Hoggson do, when their sons grow up is to see if there is not some way in which their sons can start business by being employed by W. J. Hoggson.

Anybody who wants to look up what I think of him and the way I believe in him and in what he stands for in American business can look

him up in Crowds, under the pseudonym of 'Non Gregarious,' pages 96-102, 154-156, and 157-162.

Mr. Hoggson is the safest possible type of man to put through a great hotel of a new kind for New York because he has at once creative and conserving imagination.

Many of the men who will get into the hotel when it is built and that we will be proud to have there will have merely creative imagination. They only succeed by being protected and by combining with business men who have the other kind.

W. J. Hoggson has both.

He is a man who has inspirations not merely when dreaming but when figuring. With most of us who have pleasant visions or inspirations, when figuring sets in, inspiration stops.

Figures fire Hoggson up. It is

when Hoggson begins figuring out how he can get what he wants, when he begins figuring out costs that his real inspiration begins. If he cannot find one way of working an inspiration through into its details, he finds another. He is honest minded with the grit and joy of the true scientific mind. If he cannot work his figures through into his inspiration, he turns his inspiration straight around and backs it, — backs his inspiration into the figures.

Then he welds what he wants into what can be had.

When our hotel is done, the creative business men of America will want to have W. J. Hoggson all the year round, in the best room in it.

I expect to see him some day, standing at last silent and strong and humble in his thirty-four stories of

steel and glass, the host of the great men of a nation.

But when the glory begins, he probably will never be found in his great hotel. He will be found when looked for, down cellar somewhere building a thousand miles away, a new one like it.

XVII

WHAT I WANT WITH THIS BOOK

I. I am starting a National Club in New York for men of creative imagination in America.

II. The object of the Club is to mobilize the leading constructive imaginations of this country into a compact organization in New York to save leadership or imagination for democracy and the world and to make mob rule or Bolshevist methods impossible in America.

III. To accomplish this object I propose to collect, asking five thousand people to help, a list of the men

of creative imagination in this country, a list of fifty men I propose to interpret and advertise in fifty little books like this, and of which this one about Hoggson and his hotel is the first — fifty men a hundred million people would like to be like, and would like to study, believe in, do team-work with — fifty men who would make a hundred million people see at a glance, the moment they knew about, them how much more men of imagination and leadership can get for people of each class, of all classes together, than any one class of people could ever dream of getting for themselves.

I want to see these fifty men loom up in America, great towers or citadels of the freedom and the powers of the people—loom up like national strikes.

IV. I am asking a hundred men I know and friends of men I know, to give me the names of fifty men they know and work with in their own city or their own industry, who put creative imagination, vision and action together in their work. I am asking each man in each fifty to select fifty others, then each of each fifty to select fifty more until I have the names and addresses of a hundred thousand men of creative imagination and leadership, a national Roll Call or muster of the first hundred thousand brains of a nation selected by one another.

V. I propose that these hundred thousand men have a national club headquarters in a skyscraper of their own in New York, in which three thousand at a time when they come to New York can know one another.

VI. One gets up in the morning and reads one's paper. A few hundred telegraph operators and cable operators say that they are going to shut the mouth of the President of a hundred million people. They say they are going to cut him off from talking with his secretary three thousand miles under the sea.

What do the hundred million people say to having their President treated like this by a few hundred men who want some little special private bullying thing of their own?

How can the hold-up, the weak ugly destructive way of getting things be stopped?

By making the constructive way immediately, dramatically and on a colossal national scale work better.

By showing up to everybody the men who do it.

By focusing in the same place at the same time and getting to live together and act together all men of genius and men of constructive practical imagination who habitually and demonstrably get for people and get with people more than they could dream of getting for themselves.

Fifty books, fifty plays, fifty moving picture plays, and a great home in New York for these men to live together, get together and from which to act together and conduct and organize a national anti-class war campaign — these are what I want with this book.

XVIII

THE ROLL CALL OF A NATION

THESE men who are to be picked out, each set of names being the fathers of another set of names, will come down one from the other like spiritual generations.

Men of creative imaginations are the ones who really know one another.

I care a great deal about the significance and the thoroughbredness in the selection of these lists of names.

I have no prejudice against men who have arrived, but neither books nor hotels swamped with bigwigs, by

men who are known already or that anybody knows already or that anybody could pick out, are my main interest now. I am conducting a man hunt through a nation, turning up the stones of factories and looking under them and looking behind the din of cities for men of creative imagination and leadership and true democracy in their work, the men who have been discovered by a few, who have in their hands the fate of us all, the big men of the next twenty years.

Fifty men first.

Not a day passes but I wake in the morning thinking of these fifty men, seeing through the smoke and mist of five thousand cities these fifty men and thousands like them behind them I want a hundred million people to know — men who are weaving in the looms of their hearts

and minds today, in the way they do their day's work, in the way they make crowds and men of genius act together, the fate of a world, men who are answering the cries of the people, unknown to themselves, unknown to each other and unknown to us.

XIX

TO YOU

I AM not asking you to toy with a fancy list of names or for a pleasant little marking off of men you like. I invoke your most earnest search of the men you know.

I present you with the challenge of a nation, the grim desperate sorrow and hope of my time. I ring the front door bell of your mind with this book, ask you to help me and help me now to make a census of the hopes of a nation, to help me gather together the working vision and leadership, the hopes of five thousand cities, and lay the gifts and vows of five thousand cities at the feet of my people.

XX

THE TOWER OF VISION

IT is not true that all that leaders or men of imagination in business can do is to compete with one another.

The idea that this is what leaders or men of creative imagination have naturally got to do, is twenty-five years behind the times.

John D. Rockefeller proved twenty-five years ago that the powerful thing for leaders to do was to combine. They combined and exploited the people and rocked the foundations of the world.

What leaders are going to do now is to combine to express and serve the people. Then leaders will be believed

in, will be championed and given all they want by the people, and they will pull the world together.

The thing that is going to pay next in business is to pull the world together.

Leaders or men of imagination will begin by pulling themselves together first.

The moment the things that men of imagination do for the people are made as dramatic, as visible and tangible as strikes are, the people will believe in imagination and in leadership.

The next serious business of democracy is to advertise and dramatize to the people that constructive employers and constructive labor unions can get and are getting for the people ten times what strikes and lock-outs can.

I believe these men should have a physical presence in New York.

We already have in New York a great tower of Pennies, a splendid spire in Madison Square of servants' savings. And we already have in New York down in lower Broadway a steeple to Ten Cents.

Now I want a monument on its greatest street in my nation's greatest city to a hundred thousand men of vision in five thousand cities!

I want to go by and look up at it — a kind of plain, everyday crowded cathedral of the hopes and working faiths of my people.

It is because I have seen that it will touch the imagination of a city, catch the eye and steady the faith of a nation as nothing else, this greatest hotel in the world, this material reality, this stupendous physical pres-

ence in this city of the men who are carrying in their hands the destinies of a world — forty stories from five thousand cities of the visions and the wills of the people, — that I have wanted to gather and ask thousands to help me gather, the men who shall live in this great hotel.

They shall go in and out before us.

Before growing boys and crowds in the streets, these men carrying in their hands new worlds shall go in and out.

XXI

THE FIFTY CLUB

ALL persons nominated in the way I have outlined, who qualify as shareholders and members of The Hotel Commonwealth on this fifty-name plan, will be grouped if they desire as Fifty Club shareholders and if we so wish the top story of the hotel or as many stories down from the top, as we may require, with such special dining rooms, lounging rooms and private suites as we may want, will be set aside for us.

The people who have been chosen out of five thousand cities by one another and who will naturally dominate the hotel and give it its prestige

and character — who in the most real and literal sense create it as a great property value will naturally have as many other advantages in the hotel besides looking in each others' faces, as they want. They will naturally be in a position as their own landlords and their own guests in their own skyscraper to have what they want. It is neither necessary nor desirable to state in this little book before people take action and get together the details of what we will tell our hotel we want.

Such organization as we desire and such arrangements in the hotel as we choose will be determined in due time by calling a meeting of Fifty Club representatives. In the meantime we are a list of voters, owners, landlords and guests in a great hotel fireside in New York of five thousand cities,

where we will have as many stories as we like.

XXII

BETWEEN OURSELVES

MY reader and I are now fronted up in this next page with a human and personal problem which we have with one another.

It is hard to look a hundred thousand people in the eye through a printed book.

Any one can see how it is with me, in this book, who has read this far.

I want three distinct things: First: the names and addresses which would lead to the fifty little books which could touch the imagination of a nation with what men of imagination can do in the supreme hour of a great people to help the people find them-

selves. Second: the names and addresses of a hundred thousand men of vision in America selected by one another.

These two great desires in which many people would be glad to join me are all tangled up in this book with a third desire for the success of what has to be in the nature of the case, a business proposition — a huge cooperative hotel.

Why should I, the author of *Inspired Millionaires and Crowds*, with a certain reputation for public spirit and disinterestedness that has dribbled out to me for twenty years, suddenly all at once run the risk of throwing it away by writing a morally muggy, spiritually cluttered-up little book like this, mixing religion and business?

Because I could not but tell my

reader the true story of my idea and of how it came to me — came to me in the way an idea usually is obliged to come to me if it comes at all as a picture of an idea, as an idea dramatized in steel and stone forty stories high, crowded with people who believe it.

I could not help it, that is all — this skyscraper of mine lifting itself up on the greatest street of the world's greatest city, haunting this huge, roaring, forgetting city day and night, night and day, with a hundred thousand men of vision. Probably if I were more of an artist in being believed in I would not desire in this chapter to express myself as broadly and explicitly as I am going to now.

All I can do now is to find some way with a hundred thousand strangers of being believed and of looking a

hundred thousand people in the eye.

What I want, I want, and want deeply. I do not propose to give up having America's hundred and fifty thousand men of vision for a hotel picked out by one another, or give up allowing these men of vision to have a hotel of their own in New York, because it is hard for me to avoid being a party, in building the hotel, to somebody's making some money out of it.

I cannot attend to all of the people who necessarily, from masons up, are going to make some money out of it.

But I can attend to one. I can attend to the man who with these pages is collecting the people and selling the stock for the Hotel Commonwealth, and announce that at the first possible moment when this little book has gone the rounds a Committee of

the Fifty Club will be got together to accept the little gift of my entire commission which I have accepted from the hotel (and which after deducting costs will turn out to be anything from a minimum of one thousand dollars to, ten, twenty, forty, sixty thousand dollars — as many thousand dollars as the readers of this book choose) will be presented to The Fifty Club as a start-off fund for The Fifty Club's propaganda campaign, its demonstration and exhibit campaign for team work between capital and labor, employers and employees in the present peril of the nation, for championship of the legitimate and mutual rights of all classes acting together, for the abolition of civil war in industry, for the discomfiture and defeat, as a method of getting things, of the lockout, the

hold-up, and Bolshevism in American life.

A Committee of men of national reputation (whose names, owing to vacation conditions, are not determined in time for this first edition, are to be announced later) will act as my sponsors in the matter of this donation, and with the Guaranty Trust Company of New York to act as Treasurer, and with a certified public accountant to look over and audit accounts, will report that the provisions of my understanding with The Fifty Club are carried out. Perhaps it need not be added that these gentlemen act solely in the interests of The Fifty Club, and in the interests of this fund for the purpose of The Club, and that they are neither concerned nor responsible with regard to the hotel itself from

which this start-off fund for the Club is earned.

I am not unaware that I am a little inconsistent with my own avowed business doctrines in doing a thing like this. My definition of an inspired millionaire is that his inspiration should come in, in the way he makes his money and should not be postponed or tucked away in the way he spends it, and naturally I cannot help feeling it is a second-rate thing to do, to let a chapter like this peter out into a platitudinous thing like giving away money. Everybody is doing it every day. It seems to me that what Hoggson is doing and nine out of ten business men of the better class are doing, making a fair profit out of the finer business virtues so that more and more people see they can afford to have them, is a more

profound, more serious and civilizing thing to do with money than giving it away.

But as after all, in the present psychological fix we all find ourselves in this book — this is the simplest way to get and to get quickly the three things I want—I am going to ask the people who send me their names for the Fifty Club to forgive me this once. I think it is all right if I don't get into a rut of doing it. And after all, there is a kind of luxury about it, — for a mere author, — a little luxury I might perhaps be allowed by sharing it (I hope), if nobody minds, with a hundred thousand people.

If out of the hundred thousand nominated for the Fifty Club to whom this little book is sent, a fair or usual return on advertising by

mail, shall be received, in response to this book I would be able to hand over with my selling commission earned from the hotel, a start-off campaign fund for The Fifty Club, of three hundred thousand dollars.

Of course, it is not for me to say how large the gift shall be.

But it rather takes one's breath away for a minute to think of it, of what could be done, if you who are the readers of this book could only begin believing in me as I am believing in you!

But whatever happens, now that I have made a clean breast of it I am free again! With my great country — with forty great countries I can now go forth seeking for men of vision up and down the world.

I am free to want what I want, to face five thousand cities, with what I

want — a fifteen million dollar hotel for the people, a vast, speechless house of steel and glass, not made with hands, built by a breath of publicity, with a glance by mail of a hundred and fifty thousand people, a temple of cooperation between a hundred and fifty thousand strangers, a monument to democracy, to the team work of vision and action between scattered crowds, a monument built in steel and stone around the one mutually believing, mutually intelligent idea that crowds and men of vision can act together.

I have no prejudice against banks, especially since I have seen the way they have thrown themselves into the war, — the way they have come out into the streets and in their shirt sleeves, and with a new light in their eyes, for four long years have thrown

their lot with the rest of us, have hoped with, believed with, and worked with the people.

But sometimes banks are too independent, and the principle of crowd-initiative, of cooperative finance which has been so amazingly demonstrated by the great chains of cooperative stores in England is one of the most timely quieting and reassuring principles in which the American people can believe.

It would save a great many upheavals ahead of us, if everybody knew they could make cooperation work.

The idea of having a hundred and fifty thousand people quietly and trustfully putting their hands into each others' hundred and fifty thousand pockets, and being their bankers themselves, of having the principle

all proved, worked out, and built up into a skyscraper — expressed in a forty story hotel anybody can go by and see for himself, any day, on Fifty Fifth Street and Broadway, would help a good deal, it seems to me, to make Bolshevism in this country look ridiculous, and make democracy safe. A thousand people a minute will look up and down Broadway and see the greatest hotel in the world built without a bank in sight, without a single glance at Wall Street, a skyscraper built by the spirit, by a vast national breath of mutual confidence, a tower to the freedom, the initiative, the power and vision of the people.

XXIII

THREE NOTES

THIS book is a private book. Until it serves its purpose it cannot be had by the public. It cannot be found in the book stores or be bought for money.

If a copy is in the possession of a man it means that he has been personally picked out by leading men in America to consider in the crisis of a nation what this book believes about vision and leadership and the place of vision and leadership in American life. If this book is in a man's possession, it means he is picked out by the others to belong with the men who believe it — the men who believe that

democracy works and that crowds and men of genius can act together — picked out to act on this belief — to focus the leaders, to interpret the people — round-up the faith of a nation, front the chaos of forty nations with one nation in which crowds and men of genius act together, and drive fear, hate and Bolshevism now and forever from before the faces of men out of the world.

* * *

My own experience in thinking of names is that they come trailing along, many of the best ones afterwards — and if each man will send in his list as it first comes to him without waiting to finish it and then add to it later, it will probably serve his purpose and the purpose of the Fifty Club best. Of course we want the men the whole city would select,

but we more particularly and immediately want the men the city would select in ten years and who would have to be discovered now and sent to us now by the Schwabs nearest them.

* * *

I wish there were a convenient single word — as convenient as the word “men” or the word “women” which stood for us both.

One cannot keep bothering every few minutes and holding one’s idea up in the middle of a sentence to advertise the sexes to each other or to tack on half — the whole other half of the human race.

Every time in this book where I say “men” I mean human beings — too lumbering a word to use of course, but when people—most of us anyway —speak of human beings, we not only mean women, but we mean women

first. I shall be keenly disappointed if in these lists from five thousand cities of people who have creative imagination (especially lists of people who have imagination about other people and who invoke other people, which is the most important kind of imagination to have in business just now)—we do not find the names of many women.

XXIV

BOYS WITH THE BOYS

OF course, we will not exact of our more distinguished members of the Fifty Club that they shall live in our hotel, like Booth in the Players' Club, all the time. In the case of the men who in sheer self-defense from the glare of their own glory make it the study of their lives to reduce their contacts instead of to increase them, a little presence goes a long way. If they will drop in casually, nobody knowing, and sit and smoke by our Fifty fireplace, now and then, and then let the hotel reek with themselves, with the sense that they have been there and are liable

any day to come again — all the rest of us — their friendly but as yet less glaring equals — will understand. What we want for our hotel is that it shall be deep in human possibilities and suggestion — a kind of noble mountain scenery of people. We see the hotel full of the known and the unknown together, and the old men and young men together, all in the same atmosphere of the same desire, the same inventive constructive hope for the world. Men shall come into our hotel at last as into a kind of climate or ozone of folks.

* * *

What makes a man a man is his breaking away from his environment, or his breaking into it. I often think of it when I ponder on the men I have come to know.

A true man is in constant transit from one man into another. Daily he goes past himself. Daily he gets up and finds himself.

I like to think what it might mean to comparatively young men — young men in the thirties just assailing their full careers — to be in a hotel with three thousand men finding themselves.

This is why I want the hotel. A man who knows a thousand men is a thousand times himself.

I want to see in the corridors of my hotel as I go about, eight out of ten young men — young men talking with old men, with old men who have imagination and who are therefore boys forever.

I do not know, but I cannot help wondering what would have happened to me if I had had some

fireside of five thousand cities to go to in New York and light my mind at, but it seems to me it would have saved me about fifteen years of groping about in a little suffocating made-up world until I broke away from wearied and timid men and began looking around in a big, serene place, and finding at last the men I believed lived—American men—men who like unwearied Atlases carried buoyantly (like Charles Schwab) worlds on their shoulders, nonchalant, beaming and whistling.

I have always believed in people that I could not prove existed and that I knew must be just around the corner. What if I had come on them—hundreds of them sitting in corridors—when I was living in that little tamed, insipid world of small contentments that swaggered around

me as if it were being a planet — thirty years ago?

For fifteen years I went about making people up, and here they were tucked away in their five thousand cities all the time!

“Look for the kind of world you want and you get it,” I said to myself in the dark for fifteen years.

In a way I have got it, but I cannot help thinking what I would have got if I had had a hotel to help.

I hope that the lists of names that come to me are going to be full of the names of young men — young men of imagination who, if there were a place to go to once a year where they could see in rows the torches of a world, would go home and keep theirs lighted.

XXV

A WORD AT THE DOOR

IN this little book I have come up with my vision and rung the front door bell of your mind.

You have let me in at the front door because I have come with a vision.

Why is it so many people seem to think that when the other man comes up, the man who has the practical money-end or working-end of a vision he really ought to be told to go around to the back door of their minds?

It does not seem to me it ought to be like this.

The man who has a vision — when people let him in to the front door of their minds, should stand one side a minute and let go in first, the man who brings the vision to pass.

This is why I am thinking as I stand on the threshold of your mind and am going away, of W. J. Hoggson.

This book is the first of the fifty books I am going to write about men I want everybody to know, and it would not be about W. J. Hoggson if he would ever go around, or if any man could ever send him around, to the back door of his mind.

Of course it is true that the main thing that interests me in these pages is the list of names I want handed in.

I am collecting the people for the hotel.

But Hoggson is collecting the hotel for the people.

When I asked Hoggson to come in to the front door with me, he wouldn't come. He said he would wait in the taxi outside.

TAXI OUTSIDE

Further Details and Hoggson

For Those Who Find Them Convenient

THE SITE

The site is the most distinguished and appropriate location for a mammoth hotel in the city of New York. It lies on the crest of the slight hill on Broadway — just north of Times Square.

It occupies the entire block between 55th and 56th Streets, and extends from Broadway entirely through to Seventh Avenue, so that our building will therefore face on four streets.

It is easily and quickly reached from either the Grand Central or Pennsylvania Railroad Station by the Seventh Avenue subway, and we are assured that the Broadway subway will also have a station opening directly into our hotel. Surface lines, the Fifth Avenue busses, and the Elevated Railroad, passing the site or close by, give it unsurpassed transportation facilities.

The beautiful view from the Hotel north over Central Park will prove one of its great attractions; and scores of the leading theaters, as well as the Fifth Avenue shops, two blocks away, may be reached in a few moments' walk.

THE INVESTMENT

1. New York needs more hotels — urgently.
2. Shrewd investors have recently invested many millions in hotel property here.
3. These hotels make huge profits, notwithstanding the rent, interest and carrying charges they have to pay.
4. The Commonwealth plan is to own the land, the building, the equipment and the business.
5. When the stock is sold there will be 100,000 interested patrons — a basis of a positive and extraordinarily successful business.

PRIVILEGES AND BENEFITS

1. Preferences to shareholders in reservation of rooms.
2. Club conveniences for shareholders: billiards, gymnasium, shower baths, swimming pool, indoor golf course, etc.
3. Dividends: a. Dividends of 6%. b. Dividends additional after rebates are paid. (From net earnings.)
4. Rebates — up to 20% on food and lodging. (From net earnings.)
5. Discounts on purchases through the Shopping Bureau.

COMMONWEALTH HOTEL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

18 EAST FORTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK

Authorized Capital, \$15,000,000. Shares \$100, par value

The undersigned hereby subscribes at par for _____ (_____) shares of the stock of the COMMONWEALTH HOTEL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION, full paid and non-assessable, and hereby agrees to pay for same as follows:

Check, draft or postal money order for \$_____ payable to the order of Commonwealth Hotel Construction Corporation to be sent to said Corporation with this subscription.

This subscription is based upon and is subject to the conditions and stipulations endorsed upon the back hereof, and has been signed this _____ day of _____ 191 .

Signature -----

Residence Address -----

Business Address -----

City ----- State -----

Occupation -----

Mail to be sent to ----- Address -----

FIFTY CLUB

UNIT

SUBSCRIPTION

FIFTY CLUB UNIT SUBSCRIPTION FORM

1. No more than ten (10) shares shall be subscribed for in the name of any one individual.
2. The Company shall be at liberty to change its forms and terms of subscriptions from time to time without affecting its subscriptions previously obtained ; provided that no subscriptions for stock be taken at less than par value.
3. From each subscription the first Fifteen Dollars paid thereon shall belong to the Corporation and when paid may be immediately used by it in paying all expenses of organization, securing subscriptions, etc. But no more than Fifteen Dollars of the par value per share shall be used for such purposes.
4. If in any fiscal year there shall be net earnings above all expenses (including due allowance to be determined by the Company for maintenance, deterioration and amortization of any liabilities and reserves for surplus and working capital), then such net earnings shall be applied in the following order :
 - First : To the payment of non-cumulative dividends of 6% on the stock issued and outstanding.
 - Second : To the payments of rebates of 20%, or pro rata on the amount expended by stockholders for food or lodging at the hotel in such fiscal year, provided such payments shall be made for food or lodging on prior identification at the hotel as charged to a stockholder ; and further provided, that such rebate shall not be cumulative or become in any way an indebtedness or obligation of the Company save for the payment of the same to the extent and out of such net earnings so ascertained of the particular fiscal year in which such expenditures shall have been made.
 - Third : To the payment of stockholders respectively of rebates of 20% or pro rata, on the amounts expended for food or lodging at the hotel in such fiscal year by any person previously identified at the hotel as a " guest " of such stockholder for the purpose of such charge, provided that such rebates shall not be cumulative or become in any way an indebtedness or obligation of the Company, save for the payment of the same to the extent and out of such remaining earnings of the particular fiscal year in which such payments shall have been made ; provided further that this shall only apply in cases where the " guest " of the member shall have presented at the time of registration at the hotel the regular stockholder's introduction card to be furnished by the Company for such purpose signed by the stockholder introducing the guest, it being understood, however, that preference in accommodations must necessarily be given to stockholders of record.
 - Fourth : Any balance of such earnings shall be available for dividends.
5. The Company reserves the right to reject or cancel any subscription at any time before the stock certificate for the stock subscribed for shall have been issued — upon notification to the subscriber and the return of any money theretofore paid thereon.

Mail with check, draft or postal money order to

COMMONWEALTH HOTEL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION
18 East 41st Street, New York

STATEMENT BY THE HOTEL

Course of Procedure for Those Members of
The Fifty Club who are also interested in the
Fifty Club Hotel plan.

I. Write a letter stating the desire
to join the Hotel as a member of The
Fifty Club Unit.

II. Fill in the subscription blank
on adjoining leaf for the amount of
stock desired.

III. Detach and mail blank with
remittance for the amount to The
Commonwealth Hotel Corporation,
18 East 41st Street, New York.

On receipt of the full amount of the
subscription, the certificate of Com-
monwealth stock will be sent by regis-
tered mail to the address specified,

subject however to previous sale, in which event, if all the stock is sold before a remittance reaches us, the check will be returned.

FIFTY CLUB BULLETIN BOARD

I

REPLIES accepting nomination to membership in the Fifty Club and making nominations of others should be addressed to Gerald Stanley Lee, Secretary of the Fifty Club, Mount Tom, Northampton, Massachusetts. The check for one dollar initiation fee accepting membership in the Club should be made payable to The Guaranty Trust Company, Treas., Fifty Club, who will hold the money for the purposes of the Club. This should be addressed to The Guaranty Trust Co., Treas. of The Fifty Club, 140 Broadway, New York, or if more conve-

nient it can be enclosed in the same envelope with the nomination lists to the Secretary.

II

This book is sent out to find people and if people who do not want to be found by it, will tender their forgiveness to the author and the member of The Fifty Club who has sent it to him, in the form of returning it so that it can go on and find someone else, it will be appreciated.

People who do not want to belong to The Club and who would like to keep the Club book as a souvenir of not wanting to belong to it, and of just wanting the book to belong to them, but who would rather pay for it, can send in a dollar which will be spent on the next man and in trying to guess on him better.

III

Those members of the Fifty Club who are interested also in the Fifty Club Hotel plan may address The Commonwealth Hotel Corporation, 18 East Forty-first Street, New York.

IV

Some people tell me that when it comes to the final round-up and when a man sits down to do it, there is a regular standardized way for a man to feel when he is writing a check.

That shrewd, cold, nigh, cash-register feeling.

I do not believe it.

I often feel fine.

I do it all over. I write a check now and then I would like to sign with three cheers, I feel like signing it three times. . . .

WHY NOW? AND WHY THIS PARTICULAR ONE?

YES, of course.

This is what Mrs. Noah said. One can go on saying why this time and why this place and why Hoggson's hotel forever.

One can go around the country plumping one's self before hotels in five thousand cities and murmur, "Why not here?" Why is not This the place for our hotel of the vision of a people, our skyscraper-skull for the brains of a nation? Or one could go ambling up and down a thousand years and stand before each Year, and say, "Why not some of these other years — all good years — instead of Merely This One?"

I vote for some place in particular, some time in particular where the vision — the lightning that is in the air of the time and the nation now, the light and heat and power — shall have a ground wire.

I live in a college town where twenty-two hundred possible wives go by a young man a day. Every poor dear little boy who finds that God has really seriously picked him out to be born in Northampton, Massachusetts, every day of every year of his life, from his crib up, stands on the Shore of Time, watches floods of connubial bliss, Mississippis of matrimony flowing by.

Nothing ever happens until he gets discouraged and picks out somebody in particular.

Everything that begins has to begin somewhere in particular.

The way to begin to get people to believe in the American business man and his way of putting imagination about business and imagination about people together is to take some particular business man, say something in particular about some particular thing he is doing, and help.

Fifty men of practical vision to-day, if I could publish the stories of what they do and of what they stand for, in five thousand newspapers to-morrow morning, would make a new nation before noon. Fifty men alone, once known to everybody, would rally our people to a man, would front up a nation against the fear and chaos of forty nations, would make over a world in a week. Not everybody would know everything, but everybody would believe something. Then we would go ahead.

If there were ten thousand Hoggsons, or if the ten thousand latent Hoggsons all knew about this one, it would make over the political and business world as fast as the news got out.

For fifteen years I have watched him quietly building banks and houses and with a plumb-line and the Golden Rule, treating the owner as if he were himself, and now he has come to his biggest house of all, the fireside of five thousand cities in which he is treating a hundred and fifty thousand owners, as if they were himself, and I want to help.

If a national convention of the owners and customers Hoggson has dealt with, could be called and they could all get together in a big hall and tell each other their stories of how they didn't believe in him and then of how

they did, and of what happened, it would be reported—it could not help being reported as news of national importance in the papers in the next morning.

The fate of a nation turns on the praise of the people, upon the people who follow up with praise and hound with business the men in whom they would not have believed.

I do not want to indicate (I say this in Mr. Hoggson's behalf) that there is anything so wonderful about Hoggson.

The one thing that is wonderful about Hoggson is that there might be fifty thousand of him and there are not.

But they are latent.

I believe many a man will read this book as if it were about him.

It might be.

Perhaps it will be next time.

* * *

There are two kinds of second class men in business.

There is the man who puts money first and service second.

There is the man who puts service first and money second, who never has any money.

The first class man in business is the man who is made up out of rolling the other two kinds into one man and working them together.

He is the man who has the grit to see to it that it pays to put service first.

He is the man who makes the best qualities in human nature self supporting so that more people can afford to have them.

This type of business man is doing more for civilization to-day, and do-

ing it to more people than all other people put together.

This book has at least the right to be an act of friendliness and companionship for one man, but it is more than that. It is an act of necessity — the necessity I am under, of having a fierce belief of twenty years believed by a world — the necessity I am under of grasping and appropriating a man who is dramatizing my ideas.

So here he is. Like a kind of sublimated book agent, I stand with my little book.

I hold out paper and pen to people. I say to a hundred million people, "Here is William J. Hoggson, my friend, builder of honest houses, builder of honest men, sign here!"

* * *

It would be safer and more literary

looking of course for me to wait with this book until Hoggson is dead.

I wrote Inspired Millionaires because a man I was watching be one, died at his desk in his factory. I wanted to finish out his life for him — to get thousands of other men, with a little book, to finish out his life for him.

But I am not going to wait in elegant literary leisure for W. J. Hoggson to die.

I am through with the idea that literature must be too dignified to advertise, that literature should not take the liberty to interpret the minds and free the hands of the men who dramatize ideas.

It takes literature to do it.

I am through with the idea that a classic cannot be written about a man who is alive.

I am through generalizing about ideas apart from men who generate them. I am through writing books about the dead, or writing books about the living to the unborn (tucked away as Literature) or writing books about the unborn to the living (whiffed away as prophecy). I put up my life on advertising the living to the living, on making men of genius known to the people and interpreted to their time, that the time in which I live, may live face to face with its men of vision and that they may live face to face with one another.

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